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Chair: Mr. Biang ..... (Gabon)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.30 a.m.

Agenda item 111: Measures to eliminate international terrorism (A/73/125) (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Perera** (Sri Lanka) said that Sri Lanka was committed to cooperating with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and welcomed its focus on capacity-building assistance to Member States.

2. As a country that had suffered under the yoke of terrorism for 30 years, Sri Lanka strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. All acts of terrorism were criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed; they were an attack on everyone; everyone should therefore show solidarity and unity of purpose in combating the scourge.

3. International networks with linkages to organized crime enabled terrorists to propagate their ideologies, raise funds and acquire arms. Transnational crime was funded by profits siphoned off from drugs, arms and human trafficking, environmental crimes, money-laundering and cybercrimes. Member States must pool their resources and share intelligence, data bases and expertise to address that issue.

4. Groups such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) continued to erase human history through the deliberate destruction of irreplaceable cultural heritage sites. Wildlife and forests, flora and fauna were being destroyed due to transnational organized crime, impacting vulnerable communities and fragile environments. All Member States must pool their resources and share intelligence so as to combat the problem.

5. Many challenges had arisen as a result of the changing face of terrorism and violent extremism, including through the rapid advancement of technology, porous borders and large movements of persons fleeing violence. In particular, the international community must respond more aggressively to the growing global threat of foreign terrorist fighters. The media must help disseminate a culture of peace, dialogue and understanding rather than hatred, racism and intolerance. The United Nations must give special attention to protecting those most vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism, namely marginalized communities, women and children. Refugee and asylum status must not be abused to perpetrate terrorist acts.

6. Terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. In responding to the dehumanizing lawlessness of terrorists, States must continue to ensure respect for their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, international law, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Sri Lanka stressed the importance of finalizing negotiations on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

7. **Mr. Konfourou** (Mali) said that in his country, terrorist groups had been regularly and indiscriminately attacking national defence and security forces, humanitarian and human rights organizations and fraternal international forces. Not even women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities or cultural and historical monuments had been spared. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the guilty verdict handed down by the International Criminal Court against the Malian terrorist Ahmad Al Faqi Al Mahdi for the destruction of the historic Timbuktu mausoleums and sites. His Government's efforts to achieve stability and promote development were undermined by the presence of terrorist organizations in the country and their criminal activities.

8. At the national level, Mali had elaborated a strategy to combat terrorism and violent extremism, together with a plan of action, in order to seek solutions to the root causes of terrorism, bearing in mind local realities. The goals were to support mechanisms for interfaith dialogue; train religious leaders; promote the traditional sources of stability in the community; introduce education on a culture of peace, human rights and democracy in school curricula; and finance projects for the empowerment of women and young people, in particular decent employment for youths.

9. A national legal framework in line with the country's international obligations was in place to promote the fight against terrorism; it included provisions for the punishment of perpetrators and the protection of victims. His Government had also adopted a national strategy to combat money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, and a national unit for the processing of financial data had been operational since June 2008.

10. Mali underscored the importance of regional and international cooperation for combating organized transnational crime effectively. That awareness had led to the creation of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Niger and Mali to combat terrorism, transnational crime and trafficking in migrants. Mali called on friendly countries and international organizations to support the launch and operation of the joint force, which would help create conditions for development in those countries.

11. His delegation underlined the need for Member States to agree on a definition of terrorism without further delay in order to arrive at a shared understanding of the phenomenon, which would guarantee effective international cooperation for eradicating terrorism.

12. **Mr. Amolo** (Kenya) said that the repeated brutal attacks perpetrated by the Somalia-based Al-Shabaab terrorist group, of which Kenya had been the target for years, had had a negative impact on the country's infrastructure, physical and human capital, productivity and economic growth. Terrorist attacks and violent extremism had also resulted in a reallocation of resources from growth-enhancing investment to spending on national security. For that reason, enhancing regional and international cooperation was critical for the country's security.

13. No single nation could win the war against terrorism alone. That was why Kenya had ratified and domesticated all the international conventions against transnational organized crime, including the protocols on terrorism and associated crimes such as money-laundering, drug trafficking, human trafficking and corruption.

14. Kenya had prioritized the launching of counter-terrorism policies and strategies and had stepped up efforts to halt the financing of terrorism and extremism. To that end, it supported the efforts of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism to establish a global network of counter-terrorism centres to address new developments in terrorism, share capacity-building practices and experiences and identify opportunities for collaboration. His Government reaffirmed its readiness to work with the Organization in the areas of border management, including aviation and maritime security, support for returnees, capacity-building for security forces, empowerment of women in countering and preventing violent extremism, vocational training for youth, and efforts to counter terrorist narratives and support victims. In July 2018, Kenya had hosted a joint visit by the heads of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate to explore mutual priorities.

15. Kenya had domesticated the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism through its National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism. A revamped national counter-terrorism centre that coordinated efforts against radicalization and extremism had already recorded much success. Kenya had adopted an "all-of-government" and "all-of-society" approach to preventing and countering terrorism and was reviewing its national counter-terrorism strategy to better detect early signs of radicalization and thwart terrorist plots by strengthening community policing, involving women and children in peace and security efforts, and heightening community awareness. It supported international judicial and law enforcement cooperation, mutual legal assistance, extradition and the transfer of proceedings involving terrorism and other crimes. It had forged bilateral partnerships to build its counter-terrorism capacities. Regionally, it had forged strong law enforcement and judicial cooperation partnerships within the East African Community and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

16. Kenya remained a front-line State against terrorism in Africa. It called on the international community to continue supporting the work of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) through adequate and predictable financing, because even though Somalia was relatively stable, the war against Al-Shabaab terrorism was yet to be concluded.

17. His delegation encouraged Member States to continue efforts to elaborate a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

18. **Mr. Muhumuza** (Uganda) said that his Government condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Acts of terrorism were unjustifiable, regardless of their motivations and by whomsoever committed. The international community must address its root causes, including poverty, and it was also important to have a definition of terrorism that differentiated it from legitimate struggles.

19. His delegation supported efforts to improve the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to achieve a consensus regarding a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. It endorsed the proposal to convene a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate an international response to terrorism in all its forms.

20. Over the years, Uganda had succeeded in driving terrorist groups out of its territory, but they continued to operate from neighbouring countries. All States must cooperate to eradicate those groups. Under the auspices of AMISOM, Uganda had played a central role in fighting Al-Shabaab. Efforts should be stepped up to assist Somalia in developing institutions capable of dealing with terrorist organizations that regarded that country as a safe haven for their activities. Ultimately, recourse to the judicial process was imperative in combating terrorism. In the meantime, Uganda would pursue the military option. In that connection, Uganda expressed appreciation to the Government of Tanzania for facilitating the arrest of Jamil Mukulu, the head and

mastermind of the Allied Democratic Forces, who was currently on trial in Uganda. Uganda reiterated its concern that the toxic waste being dumped off the coast of Somalia might constitute an arsenal for terrorists in their quest for weapons of mass destruction. The dumping must stop, and those responsible must ensure that it was cleaned up.

21. **Mr. Locsin** (Philippines) said that during the consideration of the current agenda item at the seventy-second session of the Sixth Committee, his delegation had spoken about the ISIL-inspired terrorist attack on the city of Marawi, the most destructive act of terrorism in his country's history. He was pleased to note, however, that the Philippine armed forces and police had succeeded in liberating the city after five months of fighting, with the assistance of the United States and Australia. That attack had demonstrated not only the transnational nature of terrorism but the symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the illegal drug trade, thanks to which a motley assortment of well-armed extremists, common criminals, mercenaries and foreign terrorist fighters had been able to band together to take control of the city.

22. The Philippines condemned terrorism anywhere in the world, however inspired. It abhorred terrorism in all its manifestations, wherever, by whomever and against whomsoever committed. Poverty was no excuse for terrorism. At the national level, the Philippines addressed terrorism and violent extremism through a whole-of-society approach, educating all members of society to resist the allure of terrorism. Although there was a long-term need to address the root causes of terrorism, once terrorism had taken hold, the first priority was to destroy it. Accordingly, his Government's response to terrorists was not to appeal to their conscience but to use force, which It was worth noting, however, that the Government did all that with the strictest regard for human rights.

23. The Philippines also acknowledged that terrorism was a global problem that no country could tackle alone. The leader in that global effort should be the United Nations, through its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. For the Strategy to succeed, the Organization and its institutional architecture must be coordinated, coherent and comprehensive. The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism must work closely with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities in supporting the implementation of that Strategy, bearing in mind respect for national ownership and priorities.

24. The fight against terrorism, which was only possible with the cooperation of those States that did not misuse that scourge as the long arm of their foreign policy, must include strengthening border controls, countering the false narratives of extremism and combating terrorist propaganda propagated on the Internet. In that connection, the Philippines endorsed the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism initiated by Kazakhstan. It should be borne in mind that terrorists took advantage of the chaos created by certain powerful States which interfered in the internal affairs of smaller States in regions of the world that they sought to control. After more than 20 years of discussions, it was high time to agree on a definition of terrorism and to agree on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

25. **Ms. Rivera Sánchez** (El Salvador) said that her Government reiterated its readiness to adopt effective measures to combat and eliminate international terrorism, which had an adverse impact on human, economic and social development. El Salvador had ratified and incorporated into domestic law a number of regional and international treaties aimed at combating international terrorism and preventing terrorist acts. El Salvador was aware of the importance of participating in and having its actions guided by a legal framework at both the international and the national levels in order to ensure that it could fulfil its commitments in combating terrorism, in line with the rule of law.

26. A special law on countering terrorist acts, passed in 2006, had set out the basic scope of the scope of the term "terrorism", based on the country's specific and historic circumstances, and had included provisions covering the prevention and prosecution of terrorist acts. El Salvador had also strengthened the institutional framework of the Office of the Attorney General, which continued to train prosecuting authorities on the application of the rules for preventing and combating terrorism and on the development of special investigation techniques. Over the past two years, the number of trials involving alleged acts of terrorism or membership of a terrorist organization or crimes contained in the special law had increased to 148.

27. Those developments demonstrated her Government's determination to continue to strengthen institutions involved in combating terrorism and to adopt measures to that end that were consistent with international human rights law, international humanitarian law and the Charter of the United Nations. El Salvador would continue to participate in efforts to implement the decision adopted by the General Assembly of a decision regarding the establishment of a working group with a view to finalizing the elaboration of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

28. **Mr. Edrees** (Egypt) said that the global threat posed by terrorism was unprecedented, not only in the terms of the objectives sought or the methods used in terrorist attacks but also in the support sometimes provided by certain regimes which offered not just financing or safe havens but also media platforms for the promotion of terrorism. Terrorist groups also continued to use information and communications technologies to disseminate their ideology and to recruit fighters, obtain financing and perpetrate their crimes.

29. The international community must therefore use comprehensive and non-conventional means to eradicate terrorism, wherever it was found, in a determined and non-selective fashion. All types of measures should be used to address the causes of terrorism, and not just military or security measures. In that connection, Egypt stressed the importance of combating extremist ideologies and all means of promoting terrorism and ensuring that terrorists and those who supported their activities were held accountable. It was also important to counter the narratives which terrorists used to promote their activities and recruit new fighters, mainly among young people. In that connection, it was essential to implement Security Council resolution 2354 (2017) and the Comprehensive International Framework to Counter Terrorist Narratives.

30. At the national level, Egypt was close to defeating terrorism in the Sinai through its comprehensive "Operation Sinai 2018", which was not limited to military operations, but included a holistic development dimension aimed at achieving real progress and raising living standards in that part of the country. Sinai residents and tribes fully supported the Egyptian armed forces, police and all relevant bodies in efforts to eradicate terrorism. The Government's counter-terrorism efforts in the Sinai served the interests of the region and the world at large.

31. The magnitude of financing of weapons, training and advanced communications technologies received by terrorist organizations in some States in the Middle East facilitated the movement and travel of foreign terrorist fighters and reflected the extent of the support that terrorists received from certain regimes. While the General Assembly and the Security Council must formulate guidelines and measures to prevent and counter terrorism, greater attention needed to be given to the implementation of resolutions adopted, whether by assisting States in their implementation or by holding accountable the regimes that continued to support, finance, arm and incite terrorism and provide safe havens for terrorists.

32. Egypt had participated actively in the drafting of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative to convene the High-level Conference of Heads of National Counter-Terrorism Agencies. Such meetings should be held on a regular basis. It was also important to support States through capacity-building in order to make them better able to implement the Strategy, in accordance with the principle of national ownership Egypt was prepared to participate in any such effort.

33. His delegation looked forward to progress being made at the current session on the elaboration of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, with a view to agreeing on a clear definition of terrorism. It was more urgent than ever to convene an international conference on countering terrorism, which would provide an opportunity to discuss issues preventing the elaboration of a draft convention.

34. Lastly, terrorism should not be associated with any religion, culture or people.

35. **Mr. Musikhin** (Russian Federation) said that, notwithstanding the military defeats of ISIL in the Middle East, the collapse of its territorial project and the decline in the flow of returning foreign terrorist fighters, branches of that organization continued to spread around the world and to recruit new members. The return of foreign terrorist fighters to their countries of origin and the recruitment of young people to join their cause allowed ISIL, Al-Qaida and related organizations to create an expansive network of sleeper cells around the world, with the support of lone fanatics that acted autonomously and unpredictably. An acknowledgment of those threats was at the heart of the General Assembly's decision to review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy; the Russian Federation endorsed the outcome of the conclusions of the most recent review and had actively participated in the High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, held in June 2018.

36. Despite having differing views on aspects of the fight against terrorism, States had succeeded in maintaining a consensus on the Strategy and its four pillars. The Russian Federation hoped that a depoliticized approach to the fight against terrorism would prevail with regard to the establishment of a network of counter-terrorism coordinators, as proposed by the Secretary-General in his seventh report on the threat posed by ISIL (S/2018/770). In putting that initiative into practice, it was important to bear in mind the principles of equality of States, respect for State sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

37. As part of the review, a number of points were important to bear in mind for the further development of the counter-terrorism work of the United Nations. Safe havens formed by terrorists on the Internet must be eradicated. The fight against online propaganda must be on a collective basis. It was important not to forget about persons who had fallen under the influence of ideologies of violence and terror. Together with law-enforcement measures, campaigns to counter propaganda needed to be launched, involving experts and religious leaders. That work must be based on Security Council resolution 2354 (2017) and the Comprehensive International Framework to Counter Terrorist Narratives. Channels that directly or indirectly sponsored the activities of terrorist groups, provided them with weapons and other materials and supported their economic transactions must be shut down. In that connection, his delegation paid particular attention to the reference in resolution 72/284 to the use of new methods and modern technologies in the financing of terrorism.

38. The military phase of the counter-terrorism operation in the Syrian Arab Republic had demonstrated that terrorist groups there had continued to receive military goods from outside sponsors. So-called non-lethal assistance that some States brought into the conflict zone under the pretext of helping the moderate opposition often fell into the hands of fighters. The problem of terrorist organizations being supplied with weapons required constant attention by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. The Russian Federation had launched a discussion of that subject within the framework of the conference on combating the illegal supply of weapons in the context of the fight against international terrorism, held in September 2018 in Moscow. A discussion on the subject should continue in the Organization.

39. In resolution 72/284, the provision on the use of applicable international instruments as a basis for mutual legal assistance and extradition in terrorism cases was of fundamental importance. The General Assembly also encouraged States, in the absence of applicable conventions, to cooperate on the basis of reciprocity. The Russian Federation reiterated its proposal to improve extradition instruments. Given the need to reduce the time frame for granting mutual legal assistance requests in criminal cases, in 2017 the Russian Federation had updated its legislation regulating the central bodies responsible for such requests. One example of effective cooperation in counter-terrorism cases had been the extradition by the authorities of Germany, Greece and Slovakia of Russian citizens who had fought on the side of terrorists in the Syrian Arab Republic. He hoped that other States would also approach the issue of bringing criminals to justice on the basis of the principle of *aut dedere aut judicare*.

40. Unfortunately, many counter-terrorism decisions adopted in the United Nations, including by the Security Council, had not been implemented. Double standards, the practice of distinguishing between "good" and "bad" terrorists, and the use of radicals to pursue geopolitical projects and destabilize and overthrow unwanted regimes persisted. Support for terrorists, regardless of their motives, was entirely unacceptable.

41. For many years, his delegation had reiterated the need to conclude negotiations on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. To reach the finish-line, all parties to the negotiation process needed to demonstrate political will. The Russian Federation thanked Kazakhstan for its initiative to prepare the Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, which it hoped would also give impetus to work on the draft convention. It called on all States to accede to the Code of Conduct.

42. Referring to the statement made the day before by Ukraine, he said that that delegation, instead of contributing to the coordination and unification of efforts, had once again used the Sixth Committee as a platform for disseminating its usual insinuations and fantasies, none of which had anything to do with the agenda item under consideration. The Ukrainian authorities should at long last begin to fulfil their undertakings under the Minsk agreements and resume the dialogue with their own people.

43. Not all States supported the introduction of prevention of violent extremism on the agenda of the United Nations, something which undermined the integrity of the international counter-terrorism legal framework. Discussions at the seventy-second session, including in the context of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy review, had confirmed his delegation's conviction that the concept had no chance of obtaining universal support. It was instructive that the proposals which could have addressed existing contradictions had been blocked. Those States willing to seek compromises should take a closer look at the pioneering Shanghai Cooperation Organization Convention on Countering Extremism. The relevant specialized United Nations organs must take into account the disagreement on prevention of violent extremism in their work and should bear in mind that it played a subordinate role in the counter-terrorism effort.

44. The Russian Federation stood ready to support the work of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, above all by providing technical assistance to those States interested in it, upon their request, and taking into account the

analysis of the relevant bodies of the Security Council. It had helped to fund projects to combat foreign terrorist fighters and enhance the counter-terrorism potential of States in Central Asia, making a large financial contribution in that connection to the needs of the Office. The Office's programmes must be aimed at strengthening national institutions on the basis of the principle of national ownership and must be implemented in close coordination with regional organizations. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the strengthening of cooperation between the Office and the Anti-Terrorism Centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

45. **Mr. Suárez Moreno** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said his Government condemned terrorist acts committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes and reaffirmed that terrorism could not and should not be associated with any religion, civilization or ethnic group.

46. International terrorism was one of the greatest threats to international peace and security. Through their actions, terrorist groups undermined the territorial integrity and political unity of States, thereby contributing to the destabilization of legitimate Governments and undermining their constitutional order, with the ultimate goal of overthrowing them. Those actions only had an adverse impact on the economic and social development, including the deliberate destruction of national infrastructure and institutions.

47. His Government expressed its full solidarity with victims of terrorism, which had also hit his country recently. It was a public, well-known and reported fact that on 4 August 2018, the President of his country had been the target of a failed assassination attempt, despite efforts to ignore or downplay the seriousness of the incident. In that connection, his delegation condemned the Government of the United States, which instigated, financed and supported a minority opposition group seeking to oust the Venezuelan Head of State, and provided a safe haven in its territory for some of the avowed masterminds and financial backers of the attempted assassination. It was therefore not surprising that that country and its satellites in the region, despite proclaiming their supposed condemnation of terrorism, had remained silent, which amounted to an endorsement of those abominable acts. His delegation called on them to comply with their obligation to either prosecute or extradite those criminals.

48. There was no such thing as "good" and "bad" terrorists. All terrorism must be prevented, combated and eliminated. In that connection, his delegation would soon submit a draft resolution on the need to strengthen international cooperation on the prevention and punishment of attacks and acts of terrorism directed against internationally protected persons. Efforts to prevent, combat and eliminate terrorism, including its financing and terrorist narratives, required greater international cooperation and the adoption of new, effective measures in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, relevant international agreements and international law. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the Code of Conduct toward Achieving a World Free of Terrorism, which had been initiated by Kazakhstan, and called on States that had not yet done so to endorse it.

49. To address terrorism comprehensively, it was important to also look at its root causes. Poverty, inequality, injustice, lack of opportunity, oppression, foreign occupation and the violation of human rights and civil liberties were factors that promoted terrorism and were exploited by criminal groups to propagate hatred, intolerance, sectarianism and extremism. His Government therefore welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism to ensure greater coherence, complementarity and efficiency in the Organization's counter-terrorism programmes and the provision of technical assistance to Member States in implementing the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to deal with requests for capacity-building, bearing in mind the specific needs and realities of the States concerned and recognizing that there could be no one-size-fits-all approach.

50. Now more than ever it was vital for States to ensure universal, non-selective compliance with the international instruments and United Nations resolutions prohibiting the transfer of weapons, the financing and training of terrorists, and the granting of safe havens to terrorist groups, and to promote a comprehensive and balanced implementation of the four pillars of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The adoption of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism would be a valuable addition to existing international legal instruments.

51. **Ms. Cerrato** (Honduras) said that her country condemned any and all forms of terrorism as being manifestations of human cruelty for which there could be no political, ideological, religious or cultural justification. It was committed to the maintenance of international peace and security and aligned itself with all actions and agreements that strengthened the interrelations and obligations among nations with a view to promoting a culture of peace.

52. As a party to international instruments against terrorism such as the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, Honduras reiterated its commitment to combating terrorism, with full respect for the Charter of the United Nations and other rules of international law, human rights and international humanitarian law.

53. Lastly, it was important to undertake a holistic analysis of the relationship between terrorism and armed non-State groups, including gangs, since their activities had an adverse impact on the protection of human rights. Honduras joined other States in calling for the elaboration of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.